R. A. Chapter of the Shekinah

25th ANNIVERSARY

DEC. 30, 1880

TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY

OF THE

Royal Arch "Chapter of the Shekinah,"

CHELSEA, MASS.,

DECEMBER 30, 1880.

ORATION,

BY COMP. CHARLES LEVI WOODBURY.

POEM,

BY COMP. BENJAMIN P. SHILLABER.

HISTORICAL SKETCH OF THE CHAPTER,

BY COMP. TRACY P. CHEEVER.

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INTRODUCTION.

The Chapter of the Shekinah having, in December, 1880, measured an existence of a quarter of a century, its members deemed it expedient to celebrate its twenty-fifth anniversary somewhat "in ancient form, and after the manner of Masons." To this end a Committee of Arrangements was appointed, consisting of E. Companions JOHN H. ROBERTS, High Priest, CHARLES M. AVERY, JAMES TENT, WILLIAM D. SEELEY, and PHILIP G. ILSLEY, Past High Priests, and Comp. CHARLES S. BEATLEY, Secretary. The committee arranged a judicious programme for the Festival, which was held in Masonic Hall, Chelsea, on December 30, 1880, at 7½ o'clock P.M. The celebration was attended only by Royal Arch Masons, members of the Chapter, their ladies, and invited guests, who formed a large and brilliant assembly. M.E. THOMAS WATERMAN, M.D., Grand High Priest of the Grand R.A. Chapter of Massachusetts, honored the occasion with his presence, and was attended by Comp. ALBERT L. RICHARDSON, Grand Captain of the Host. In the absence of Comp. ROBERTS, High Priest, who had been suddenly called to a distant State, the Grand High Priest, with his suite, was received and welcomed by Comp. JAMES DONAGHY, E. King. After the reception of the Grand Officers, Comp. TRACY P. CHEEVER, the first High Priest under the Charter, was invited to preside, and take charge of the exercises of the evening. A very large attendance of ladies lent grace and attraction to the Convocation.

After the performance of an overture by the orchestra, and prayer by Comp. JOHN P. PAYSON, Chaplain, the presiding officer made an introductory address, in which he welcomed the

ladies and guests of the Chapter, and referred briefly to its rise and progress, and the good work it had thus far accomplished in the cause of R.A. Masonry. The Beethoven Quartette Club, of Boston, followed with a piece of music, which was excellently rendered.

The programme was continued by the delivery of an elaborate and well-considered oration by Comp. CHARLES LEVI WOODBURY, of Boston, an early member of the Chapter, whose reputation as a Masonic scholar and devotee is too well-known to be here dwelt upon. Further music by the quartette followed, and a poem prepared by the laureate of the Chapter, Comp. BENJAMIN P. SHILLABER, who was unfortunately detained from the gathering by a home-compelling rheumatic infirmity, was read in a spirited manner by Comp. JOHN P. PAYSON. The poem possessed the characteristic excellences of the bard, as will readily be seen by all who may peruse it in the pages following.

At the close of the exercises in the hall, the company repaired to the banquet-room and indulged rationally in the pleasures of the well-loaded and flower-garlanded table, at which Comp. CHEEVER presided. Here, for the short time allotted to this service, piquant and entertaining speeches were made by the M.E. Grand High Priest, Comp. WOODBURY, Comp. WM. PARKMAN, and Comp. SERENO D. NICKERSON, Past Grand Master of Masons in Massachusetts, and the entertainment of the evening ended with dancing in the lower hall. It should, perhaps, be added, that prior to the closing of the banquet the celebrated *Nightingale's* Song was sung, under the lead of the Beethoven Quartette, the ladies all rising and joining in the chorus.

By vote of the Chapter, it was ordered that the proceedings of this Anniversary, including the oration and poem, and a brief historical account, prepared by Comp. CHEEVER, should be printed, that thus the memory of this pleasant occasion may be transmitted to our successors.

ORATION.

BY COMP. CHARLES LEVI WOODBURY.

Companions of the Royal Arch Chapter of the Skekinah: —

Twenty-five years ago the foundation of this Royal Arch Chapter was laid according to the true principles of Freemasonry. Here the early builders, with the tools of their craft, following the plans which the wise masters of our art had drafted on the trestle-board, constructed this noble monumental arch; the material they worked on was not vulgar or chance selected. Considering with St. Paul and Jacob Boehman that the human heart is the temple of the Holy Ghost, with painful examination they selected men of good report for the solidity of their judgment, the respectability of their manners, and the industry and rectitude of their lives, as candidates for these high mysteries; men who had been never found unworthy.

With such strong material they fashioned the spiritual part, cementing it with Masonic virtues, until now in the broad light we exhibit our Royal Arch made perfect in unity throughout, decorated and perfumed with the brotherly love and charity of its Companions.

Many of the original charter members are not here in the flesh; but three of them live, one of whom, Comp. GOODWIN, stands with the Companions to-day and joins in the jubilee over the work which they founded.

For more than sixty years has our worthy and active brother worn the apron.

It is a good thing for a town or a city that a Royal Arch Chapter is located within its limits. It gives an encouragement to the pursuit of the social virtues, to the practice of a liberal benevolence of the heart, that do good men much good, and lead them to loftier aspirations for the fraternity and liberty of all men.

Take notice of this, that whilst inculcating on every brother pure morals, devoted patriotism, and religious reverence of the Deity we all adore, we also avow the freedom and independence of every brother's creed and politics from any Masonic interference whatever; and we proclaim that one of our noblest missions of good-will to men is to bring together on an equal footing good men of different creeds and politics, and make them better acquainted.

In the practice of this duty a Chapter is a bond of mission, strong and desirable,—strong, because it respects their individual opinions, and leaves the politics and religion of the individual free from interference; and desirable, because whilst in her own broad humanity she pledges those that she receives that their self-respect shall not be infringed in her society, she will receive none who do not respect themselves and the rights of others. Consequently, in her broad fraternity, kings of good character, mechanics, tradesmen, and other craftsmen, of good character, meet on a common level, and treat each other with the respect one gentleman owes to another.

I must not squander your time on abstract propositions in Masonry. It is proper that we should consider Chapter Masonry as our theme to-night.

Two questions arise: What is it? When did it begin?

In itself it claims an origin connected with the building of King Solomon's Temple, at Jerusalem, in which two kings and an architect were prominent characters in the story told by the chroniclers.

The Kings David and Solomon, at immense expense of time and labor, took a ridge of Mount Moriah, within the limits of the city of Jerusalem, and, by building up from the valley on each side, with huge stones, cyclopean walls, widened out and made a plateau of the height of the top of the ridge, that is, about one hundred and forty feet above the valley of Jehosophat. It now, in width, averages nine hundred and fifty feet, and its length is fifteen hundred feet.

On this plateau, or terrace, was built King Solomon's Temple, about a thousand years before Christ; the foundations were

laid in May, 1012 B.C. This temple had the Shekinah. Some four centuries afterwards the city was taken by the Assyrians, the people were led into captivity, the temple was burnt down; after seventy years part of the Jews came back, and the temple was rebuilt upon its ancient site; but it had lost the oracle, — it had not the Shekinah.

Various were the vicissitudes this temple underwent, — destruction in the Maccabean wars, reconstruction, and finally in Herod's day it again became, as Josephus describes, one of the most imposing fanes the world has known. Capts. Wilson and Warren, after their late investigations, have concluded the courts of King Solomon's Temple occupied a rectangle of nine hundred and odd feet from east to west, and six hundred feet from north to south. They conclude the east wall to have been of Solomon's time, both because of Phenician Masonry marks found on the stones of the foot of the wall and other historical and architectural reasons.

It was said by the sacred writings of the Jews, that later temples, however much their courts were enlarged or decorated, were less in glory and sanctity than Solomon's, in this, that none of them had the Shekinah.

This significant name has been given to your Chapter, in token of that mystic covenant by which the Shekinah rested on the ark of the tabernacle, when the Hebrews journeyed through the wilderness, guided by its awful but assuring presence. It further recalls to us the oracles which it inspired, and the Great High Priests whose utterances revealed its commands.

The holy books teach that the Shekinah dwelt in the first temple, near the oracle, in the holy place. There Levites and priests invoked its guiding will. There behind the vail, or, as some Talmudists state, the two vails which divided the Holy from the Holy of Holies, the priest placed the censer between the staves of the ark, and heaped upon the live coals the fragrant incense until the house was filled with the smoke of its perfumes.

In the second temple the oracle ceased to reply to the in-

vocations of Israel. The covenant of indwelling was not renewed as to this structure.

The Mishna tells us (see Barlay's Talmud, p. 16), that the Holy Spirit spake to the Jews during the tabernacle by the Urim and Thummim. During the first temple it spoke by the prophets; but under the second temple it spoke by the *Bath Kol*, or daughter of a voice, which the Jews held to be as inferior to the oracular voice proceeding from the mercy-seat of the first temple as a daughter is inferior to her mother.

It is easy to perceive that the second temple could not bear the relation to the scattered children of the covenant which the first temple bore prior to their dispersion and captivity; hence we find in Malachi, "Then they that feared the Lord spoke often one to another, and the Lord hearkened and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and they that thought on his name!"

The Talmudists interpreted this that the Shekinah would rest with two, and that it would also rest with three, who have eaten at one table and have spoken of the law. They were to be considered as if at the table of the sanctuary. — Ezekiel 41 : 22.

It is needless to repeat all the authorities. It may be assumed as a settled doctrine that the Shekinah would be with three, five, or seven, when met together and speaking of the law, wherever the place of meeting may be.

On the strength of this depends the sanctity commonly ascribed to synagogues and churches which are not located on the site of the Temple of Solomon.

I have gone into this apparently extraneous matter that it may appear to you that the dedicatory name your Chapter bears is not only symbolic in its relation to the first temple and the covenant; but that its present use and application are sanctioned and in conformity with the *Bath Kol* of the prophets and the rabbis, on whom the hidden wisdom rested for interpretation during the five centuries that followed the destruction of the temple.

To us as Masons the name of our Chapter brings a crowd of

holy memories connected with the first temple dedicated to the Holy Architect of the Universe.

The last destruction of the temple was A.D. 70, when Titus captured Jerusalem. For many years after this Jerusalem was a waste, and its occupation for residence forbidden by decrees of the empire. But Jerusalem is more truly the Eternal City than Rome.

In time Rome became converted to that outshoot of the Judaic root and creed we call Christianity, and began its pilgrimages to the Holy Sanctuary on Mount Moriah.

On this site some say a Christian church was built by the Empress Helena; but, however this may be, when, several centuries later, the Caliph Omar captured the holy city, he built a mosque on this terrace.

There are two mosques now on the terrace, one called "El Aksa," the other, "Omar."

One of these is on the site of the old temple, but which that is forms the subject of a lively difference of opinion among architects and antiquaries.

The terrace is more wonderful as a work of art than the mosques. Probably it was more so than either of the temples which it sustained. It is the object of curious exploration to-day, and the Turks rigidly restrict and prevent the explorations of its sewers, aqueducts, and other passages, being brought into the neighborhood of the mosques, so we cannot yet gain much insight into the foundations of King Solomon's Temple. There they are, probably as intact as they were two thousand eight hundred years ago, capable of telling the inquirer their story and that of their builders, — "David's Masons," "Solomon's Masons," and "Huram's Masons," the lodges whom the Bible says worked upon it.

Two things explorers have found there: —

1. Parts of the original Solomon wall of the terrace; and there the Jews go now to weep and mourn for Jerusalem as they have gone since Titus' time.

2. In some of the voussoirs, passages for water, now dried, and seventy feet below the surface of the terrace, have been

found the marks of the Masons of Hiram, painted on the stones,— real Mason marks twenty-eight hundred years old.

Not merely in one, but in several places in the interior of the terrace, these Mason's marks have been discovered by Capt. Warren and others of the recent explorers. In their purpose and in their form many of these marks are similar to those used by the cathedral-building Freemasons a few centuries ago.

Some are found cut into the stone, whilst others are painted upon it. Drawings have been published of them often. Those found on the front of the sanctuary wall were protected by the stone chippings and rubbish which in twenty-seven or twenty-eight centuries had accumulated so much that Capt. WARREN was compelled to dig down fifty feet through it before he ran his drift to the lower courses of the wall, on which he discovered several groups of them. Truly the mark of the Mason was an old institution, pertaining to the earliest civilization.

It is not alone around Jerusalem, but the monuments of Egypt, Phenicia, and many other places, bear similar marks of Mason architects, inscribed at as early or often earlier dates on the stones they wrought for the master-builders' designs. But perhaps more wonderful than these Mason's marks are the subterranean chambers which abound beneath the plateau.

In erecting the terrace successive rows of walls were built, between which chambers were formed and arched over; frequently they were filled with earth and rubbish, whilst some were left as vaults, crypts, or halls, for particular purposes. Some of these have been opened recently, — one, a hall or chamber thirty by twenty-three, is familiarly known as Freemasons' Hall. Another is known as King Solomon's Stable. Some were used to store grain and provisions, some to hold water.

This subterranean hall, which by common consent the explorers call the Masonic Hall, is situated partly below or adjacent to the Hall of Justice. The capitals of its pilasters are beautifully carved, and, say the explorers, "This chamber has every appearance of being the oldest piece of Masonry visible in Jerusalem with the exception of the sanctuary walls, and perhaps as old as they." One of them gives further significance: "I was lowered down by means of a rope, and was considerably surprised to find myself in a large, rectangular, vaulted chamber, of ancient construction, *with a column or pedestal sticking up from the centre.*"

This subterranean is outside of the sanctuary terrace, but near to it. Its connections have not yet been fully explored.

I have already said that the jealousy of the Turks prevents investigation of the most promising parts of the terrace; but beneath its stone pavements enough of vaulted chambers, of columned and pillared arches carved with skill and beauty, and built with a solidity that has defied Time's effacing finger for over twenty-eight centuries, remains to prove to the world that the vaults and crypts of Solomon's Temple were of enormous magnitude and profundity, divided and sustained by a wealth of arches, vaulted roofs, and pilastered walls, not to be paralleled or equalled by subterranean structures connected with any great temple of antiquity. It is a shining distinction for the substructure of Solomon's Temple that in no other antique structure has such a liberal use been made of vaulted roofs, and the ROYAL ARCH.

His builders acquired a mastership of this branch of their art so perfect and so excellent, that it is no wonder that the tradition of their eminent skill should not only have existed whilst access could be had to their work; but that since the Moslem jealousy, for the last six centuries, has excluded these remains from examination, a lively and not very ancient tradition among the followers of Architecture and Masonry should have kept alive its storied glories and handed down its golden fame from generation to generation. We must remember that the warlike knights and crusaders conquered and held for fractions of two centuries the holy Jerusalem, and that the Knights Templars' residence was on this terrace; hence the avenues of exploration and means of knowledge of the interior of the sanctuary were then at the service of the Craftsmen and their Architect Master Masons.

In the Talmud already quoted is a curious tradition of the rabbis: that in the old temple, directly where the ark of

the tabernacle is placed, there was at the level of the floor a broad, flat stone, which was the *foundation stone* of the temple.

There is a little obscurity in the Books of Chronicles and Kings on the subject, perhaps intentional, but more lamentable because important Hebrew books referred to in Scriptures are lost: such as "The Book of the Acts of Solomon," "The Book of Nathan the Prophet," "The Book of Abijah the Shilohite, "The Visions of Iddo the Seer,"— all treating of more or less of the reign and times of Solomon, and nothing but the ruins and traditions are left by which these obscurities may be relieved. The existing sacred books say that in the fourth year of Solomon's sole reign he began to build the temple upon plans of dimensions received from his father, David, and finished it in seven years. Now, if you apprehend that "the Masons of David" and "the Masons of Huram" worked at the subconstructions which were forming the plateau base which the temple was intended to crown, from when David began until the fourth year of Solomon, the story in Chronicles and Kings will not be impaired; and the terrace enlargement and the temple building may thenceforward have proceeded together. If David did not actually lay the "foundations" concurrently with his base structure, he left space for them to be laid, and furnished the plan to his successor.

Those foundations yet remain in their site, a sealed book; the keystone of the mystic arch, in all probability, is still in its place; "the corner-stone" may yet exist intact.

Pompeii and Herculaneum have yielded up their secrets after eighteen centuries of concealment. The tombs of Egypt and their sacred writings have done the like.

Political obstacles alone restrain the ardor of Freemasons and architects, of engineers and antiquaries, from penetrating through that one hundred and forty feet of surviving structure down to the bed-rock of the valley; exploring every arch and every tier of groined arches, unveiling to the reverent spirit every carving and every inscription.

A new crusade is preparing. The chivalry of Masonry,

science, art, and religion are stirred with a new-born impulse, urging them to Jerusalem in pursuit of the lost knowledge. With the Masonic banner of "Liberty, equality, and fraternity" shall float "Peace and good-will" in the van, and the jealousy of intolerance will melt before the pillar of light that guides us on our way.

The Arabs of to-day call Jerusalem El Shem, the Holy City.

The mysterious and solemn grandeur that clings to the sacred precincts of the plateau I have been describing is acknowledged with reverence in every quarter of the globe.

The three great modern religions look on this terrace as a sacred sanctuary; the children of Israel, the Christians and the Mahommedans, alike bow the head with reverent souls when its memory is evoked.

To the Masonic fraternities these remnants of the work of the early Masons, and the traditions of its construction, add a special interest to the religious memories that linger around the site of the gorgeous fane that once crowned its utmost heights.

May the light of that Skekinah never cease to illumine the mystic delta that symbols forth the faith and hope which guide you, my Companions, in your Masonic labor.

CAPITULAR MASONRY.

In this generation we are accustomed to view Capitular Masonry organized independently from Blue Masonry; but this has not always been the case.

In the last century Grand Lodges, like the ancients, at some early time in their organization, conferred the royal arch degree as the completion of the master's degree in the blue lodge. There is some doubt, but it is probable also that the mark master's degree was conferred also in these lodges.

There was controversy between the "ancients" and "moderns" until 1813, and there is evidence that after some duration of this controversy the moderns, at least in some of their subordinate lodges, also conferred one or more of these degrees.

The Irish and Scotch Lodges assimilated in the use of these degrees to the ancients.

Late in the last century the English laws regarding secret societies prevented any new Masonic societies being formed, and the Masons were compelled to work chapter and templar degrees under the existing charters of the blue lodges, unless there may have been an exceptional old charter for a Chapter or Preceptory, which is doubtful.

In these colonies, now the United States, lodges were in existence in the last century, working under the charters of the ancients, who claimed to have the old York Masonry; also other lodges working under charters from the Grand Lodge at London, the "moderns;" some, also, under Scotch and Irish charters. In activity, vigor, and numbers, the ancients rather surpassed the modern in America.

In many of these lodges royal arch and templar degrees also were conferred, — I have seen old diplomas of this sort at various times; some other of the degrees were also thus conferred.

After our political revolution was accomplished, and the independence of our Masonic organization had been established, the good sense of our fathers triumphed over the divisions of foreign origin, and the Union of Ancient and Modern Lodges into one Grand Lodge in each State was speedily effected (in Massachusetts in 1792) in every State of our Union. The Pennsylvania Grand Lodge still continues her control over the royal arch degree. The example set here was followed by England in 1813.

Organization is likely to vary in different countries, and many differences may exist without any substantial departure from the landmarks.

The true historian is distinguished by his power to comprehend the subtle distinction such questions often present. Without a better research for the materials extant in England than her Masonic historians have yet made, scant means exist for those who live at a distance to compare her position with that of other countries in the last century.

In undertaking to bring some of these scanty materials to your attention, it is with a protest neither to be responsible for the meagreness of the facts, nor for not undertaking to draw any definite conclusions from them.

Hints at the templar and royal arch degrees are found as early as 1723, in the history and constitutions published by the London Grand Lodge.

In the history of Masonry, forming part of the Constitution, published in 1723, *under the authority* of the Grand Lodge of London, and their first publication, — an original copy of which is before me as I write, — Dr. Anderson, the compiler, states that "the societies and orders of the warlike knights, and of the religious orders too, in process of time did borrow many solemn usages from this *ancient fraternity*," — a fact, he says, "if it were expedient it could be made to appear." In the light of what has since existed, this appears to be rather a significant hint of a connection then (1723) between the ancient fraternity and some such bodies as the Knights Templars, St. Andrew, Kadosh, *or some* like the princes of Jerusalem; especially when we couple it with the immediate following language, defying the most cunning and learned to penetrate into the peculiar way in which Accepted Masons have propagated their concernments, etc., etc.

In the concluding paragraph of the "history" he speaks of the Annual Grand Assembly, at London, "wherein the forms and usages of the most Ancient and Worshipful Fraternity are wisely propagated, and the royal art duly cultivated, and the cement of the brotherhood preserved; so that the whole *body* resembles *a well-built arch*," etc.

Does not this look like a reference to the *Royal Arch* by the reverend doctor, with the approval of Dr. Desaguilliers and the Grand Lodge itself, in 1723?

The fact that by the Article 13 of the Constitution, the working of the third degree in that fraternity then was reserved to Grand Lodge alone, except by dispensation, gives more significance to the allusion to the *arch* in this book.

York Masonry was older than the London Grand Lodge, and

its records antedate 1717 by more than a dozen years, if I understood Brother HUGHAN's book on York Masonry correctly. He states Sir George Tempest was Master of the lodge there in 1705, and gives a list of his successors. It may be cavilled whether this oldest *Record-keeping* English Lodge was entitled to call itself "Grand" Lodge. Like the "Quarterly Communication" of Mr. Anthony Sayre's friends at London, it so declared itself. Now, if "usage" in 1705–1717 was the authority, or gave the definition, no one has shown where the York Lodge failed to comply with usage. If the Masons of "the drooping lodges of London" invented the organization, it was equally free to the Masons of the north to organize likewise. York and the London of 1717 or 1723 (whichever is the true date) are both dead as separate individualities, and the present Grand Lodge of England holds their goods and powers, and occupies their territories. This Grand Lodge of all England, Orient at York, during a considerable time prior to its dissolution, in 1792, worked some of the Chapter degrees.

In 1779 an inventory of its effects describes among them, "a narrow folio book containing sundry accounts and minutes relative to the Grand Lodge, beginning Mar. 7th, 1705–6;" also, "a bundle of letters and sundry old papers." These papers and this book are not now to be found; the loss of this most ancient Grand Lodge record, in England, is, indeed, a calamity to the historian and antiquary. It is fair to presume that its contents sustained the claims of the Grand Lodge to the position which they asserted of their superior antiquity, directly the publication in 1723 of the pretensions of the London Grand Lodge was officially made, — assertions which they continued to reassert whilst this document remained in its possession.

Another important item is disclosed in this list of 1779, — that their *old seal* was in existence. In their letter of Dec. 14, 1767, to the Grand Lodge of London, they describe this seal. In the Proceedings of the Massachusetts Grand Lodge for March, 1880, Brother MARVIN gives a blazoned drawing of it, and makes some apposite remarks. The list describes one

side of the seal as bearing the arms of Prince Edwin; the other (obverse), the arms of Masonry.

That distinguished Masonic historian, Brother HUGHAN, who published this list in 1871, in "the Kingston Masonic Annual," last year, at the request of Brother MARVIN, sent him "a squeeze" or "rubbing" of both surfaces; one side had three crowns, two over one, and a Latin motto on a Norman shield, stating it was the seal of the brethren at York, collected by Edwin of Northumbria, A.D. 926. On the ribbon, or a book at the top, were the square and compasses.

On the other side were three crowns, no shield, and on a band the legend in Latin: "The seal of Edwin, King of Northumbria."

There is a significance in this symbol that appeals to ineffable Masons in the strongest way as to "the hidden wisdom," which Brother MARVIN expresses by stating that in the Royal Arch Grand Chapter of England the three crowns *are still used*, placed one over two.

There is yet preserved among the York documents "another parchment roll, containing the manual subscriptions, etc., of persons made Masons in the *Grand Lodge*. It begins March 19, 1712, and ends with the minutes of a lodge, May 4, 1730."

Until the English investigators have shown that the contents of these parchment rolls in any way fail to meet the indexed description of their contents, or in some other way limit it, the presumption that the royal arch was not an innovation, but rather was in the constant use of their organization, as *part of Masonry*, must continue predominant over any mere contradictory assertions.

It is a tough job to frame an indictment of persistent perjury against a whole people for near a century; may I not say it is more difficult still to prove such a one to the satisfaction of their living successors?

When the rival Grand Lodges of England, the ancients and the moderns, came together and framed articles of union, in 1813," in the second article of union it is declared and pronounced that pure ancient Masonry consists of three degrees, and no

more, viz., those of the entered apprentice, the fellow craft, and the master mason, including the Supreme Order of the Holy Arch. But this article is not intended to prevent any lodge or chapter from holding a meeting in any of the degrees of the orders of chivalry according to the constitutions of the said orders."

We have it thus officially stated and admitted by the Grand Lodge formed 1717–1723, at London, equally with the Grand Lodge of the Ancients, and their successor, the present Grand Lodge of England, that the order of royal arch is part of the master's degree of Freemasonry and the perfection of its initiation.

These admissions substantiate its claim as a landmark of English Freemasonry. They were voluntary acts of the craft of a great nation, guided by honorable and devoted officers, and, so far as the London or Modern Grand Lodge was concerned, it was an admission against the pretensions now set up in derogation of the honor of its act.

In the very character of the degrees themselves the initiate readily recognizes the justness of the fact, that the royal arch is the perfection and completeness of the master's degree, in Blue Masonry.

MARK MASTERS.

From what I have already said you will discern that in the oldest remnants of early architecture the Freemason is found to have identified himself with his work by the aid of his Mason's mark.

That from this beginning to the present the mark has been the practical sign of the skilled Mason. In Scotland, where the records of the old lodges have been preserved, the initiates each adopted and recorded his mark, whether he was an operative or an accepted Mason.

It would seem, there, that the adoption of the mark was a part of the fellow-craft degree in early days. Sure it is, that an operative fellow-craft Freemason stood more in need of his mark for practical purposes than the master did. The

recorded marks of Scotch Masons are found on records of St. Mary's Chapel Lodge as early as 1599. In England the records of early lodges have not been preserved, and that species of testimony cannot be applied to the history of this point within a century of so early a period. From the time when records are found for English Lodges, they throw little light.

Companion WHYTEHEAD, in an article lately prepared for the Grand Chapter of Pennsylvania, states that the earliest record in London of its being worked in a blue lodge, that he knows of, is in August 9, 1777, St. Thomas Lodge, No. 143, under the Ancients, when mark Masons and mark masters were made there. He thinks it was there worked in connection with the second degree. Companion WHYTEHEAD also says that in the Grand Lodge of *all* England, having its Orient at York, this degree would seem always to have been worked, from the fact that the Grand Officers in signing used to attach their mark ciphers with their signatures.

In the original published edition of the Constitutions, 1723, Dr. ANDERSON speaks in a note of the "key of a fellow craft" being needed to understand the uses and customs of Masons. Does he here obscurely refer to the mark degree?

Speculation apart, there is no reason why the mark of a Mason should not as well have obtained in English lodges as in Scotch. The operatives have used them at all times, from the dates of the Pyramids and the Towers of Jerusalem, as the stones still extant bear faithful witness. Some positive proof that they were not in use by English operatives is necessary before we can assume Masonry there to be exceptional in this from its universal character elsewhere. Until this is furnished the weight of probability is that one of the two mark degrees was worked at York, if not both.

AS A CHAPTER DEGREE.

Coming now to another point, these degrees appear in history also organized as *Chapter degrees*, in a separate organization from Blue Masonry, leaving the first section of the

master's degree in an independent connection with its two preliminary grades.

It has been much the fashion for glib commentators to assert that LAWRENCE DERMOT invented and put these degrees in practice with the "ancients;" but Brother HUGHAN'S "memorials" effectively routes this fudge work by showing that they were known before DERMOT became a member in the ancients' organization.

Judge GARDNER and Brother HUGHAN concur in thinking D'Assigny's book, published in 1744, contains the first published allusions to Royal Arch Masonry. The book states that it had been worked a few years in Ireland, and longer in London. It also states, "It is an organized body of men who have passed the chair, and given undeniable proof of their skill in architecture; it cannot be treated with too much reverence, etc., etc."

In another place the author says he is informed that at York an assembly of Master Masons, under the title of Royal Arch Masons, is held.

He also states, "Were it expedient, it could easily be proved that the Knights of Malta, and many other religious orders and societies, did borrow their solemn usages from our ancient fraternity," etc.

Brother HUGHAN, to whom we owe the republication of this nearly lost treatise, asserts that the royal arch was adopted by the "discontented Brethren," at London, "about 1736–9."

At one time he limited its origin to "since 1728," but in the "memorials" he guards himself from any assertion regarding the date of "origin," — an exemplary caution which other essayists might well copy.

Brother LYON, the admirable historian of Masonry in Scotland, is of opinion that the royal arch degree was worked, as stated by D'ASSIGNY, in Ireland, and carried thence by Irish army lodges into Scotland, and that in both these countries it was more generally earlier worked than in England. In Scotland it awoke the jealousy of the government, and at the end of the last century public prosecutions were pressed against JOHN ANDREW and ROBERT RAMSEY, for administering

oaths, for blasphemy, and for conspiracy against the Crown by initiating certain persons into the chapter and templar degrees. After a criminal trial in 1800, in which the judge charged dead against the defendants, the jury acquitted the prisoners. The story is told at length in Lyon's history of Freemasonry in Scotland.

Chapter organization began later in England, only within the present century, and their organization differs in many respects from what it is with us.

It has been stated by some continental writers, and reëchoed apparently without examination, that the first Chapter of the cryptic degrees was formed by Charles Edward and his friends, at Arras, in France, between 1735 and 1740, with the political object to use it for the organization of his friends in Great Britain in connection with his claim to the throne as the last of the Stuarts.

It has also been said that with this purpose it was subsequently introduced into Ireland, Scotland, and England.

It is also said that the Chevalier Ramsay, a noble and literary Scotchman, of the Pretender's suite, was the author and inventor of these degrees, and that he brought them to Ireland. The value of these statements I shall not now discuss.

In the Bordeau Constitutions, to which the date of 1736 is attributed, the royal arch degree is substantially embodied as part of the system of Freemasonry, known now as the Ancient Accepted Scottish Rite. How long it had been so practised, or when the twenty-five degrees referred to in the Bordeau Constitutions were first brought together, slight information has been published.

The part of the Scotch rite in which the royal arch is included was brought to America in 1761, by Brother STEPHEN MORIN. Grand Lodges to work it were formed in Philadelphia and Charleston very early.

At Albany a Grand Lodge of Perfection was formed in 1767, which for many years worked the degrees in which the royal arch is required for the perfection of the Masonic teaching of a Master Mason.

In Massachusetts the late Grand Master MOSES M. HAYES received the powers to institute Grand Lodges of Perfection and Councils of Princes of Jerusalem, by deputation from Morin, through H. A. FRANCKEN. We are not positive that he exercised them before 1780, but the probabilities are that this distinguished Mason aided in practising this degree here.

In Massachusetts the surrender or disuse of these degrees by the blue lodges was promoted in a large measure by the early organization of a Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masonry as a separate body to work the four degrees still included in its jurisdiction.

The first Provincial Grand Master, 1769, from Scotland, the afterwards celebrated General Joseph Warren, seems to have authorized a Chapter, or Royal Arch Lodge, which, in August, 1769, conferred the degrees of Excellent, Super-Excellent, Royal Arch, and Knights Templar.

Judge GARDNER states there are indicia that St. Andrews Lodge, as early as 1762, conferred some of these.

GRAND CHAPTER.

In Massachusetts the first Grand Chapter was constituted at St. Andrew's Lodge, and substantially by members of that body, in 1769, it continued its labors; after 1795 the strength of Chapter Masonry had become such that the Companions sought to establish methods, and organize conformity in a system of work. In this State King Cyrus' Chapter, connected with St. Peter's, of Newburyport, and St. Andrew's, held some important conferences. Their efforts were stimulated by a visit of a committee from Temple Chapter, Albany, N.Y., consisting of THOMAS S. WEBB and JOHN HANMER. The result was an effort to establish a union of the Chapter jurisdictions of all the States in a General Grand Chapter. Within the year this work was substantially finished by the election of Grand Officers, and adoption of a constitution. The constitution provided for the creation of State Grand Royal Arch Chapters, and Massachusetts organized hers, March 13, 1798, at the famous Green Dragon tavern, the headquarters of St. Andrew's Lodge. M.E. BENJAMIN HURD, Jr., was elected Most Excellent Deputy Grand High Priest, and on the next day, pursuant to adjournment, he, with the other Grand Officers, was installed in ample form. In July they adopted their constitutions. There were but two Chapters in the State. In 1799 a change was made, by the Grand Chapter of the United States, in the title of the State organizations, dropping the word deputy. It was ratified by this Chapter, which thereupon took its present name of "Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Massachusetts."

I have laid these fragments of history before you, because of their Masonic interest, and without intruding any opinions on the scant evidence and conflicting views respecting the early history of these degrees. I advance no theory as to the time or place of their origin, nor have I attempted to produce all the evidence extant which may bear on these questions.

Whether these degrees were originally embodied in a Chapter distinct from the Fellow Craft Lodges, and by some administrative chance became united with the lower grades of initiation, or whether they substantially existed in Craft Masonry, as it existed prior to the eighteenth century, I do not propose to examine.

The convenience of the craft, about the beginning of this century, led to the separation of these from the lower degrees, and operated so universally on the craft that in the early part of the present century, in every country, the division into separate but successive bodies became fixed. England marked this change with the explicit recognition of the true Masonry of the royal arch degree; thus absolutely contradicting any pretension that either the blue or the red had repudiated or denounced the legitimacy of the other within "the ancient landmarks" of the craft.

The harmony of Masonry triumphed over the disturbers of its peace, schism was overwhelmed, and Freemasonry, distinct in its grades and government, yet united as the equal sides of the mystic triangle, forms a glorious whole, from the cornerstone at the base to the copestone which crowns its topmost

turret, and supports the "keystone" of the fabric, "so that the whole resembles a well-built arch." (*See Constitutions* 1723, *p.* 48, *original edition.*)

Doubtless Masonic scholars of England and the Continent will, with unpartisan spirit, collect more information of the working of these rites in the eighteenth century. I trust they will be guided by a wisdom that realizes the beneficence of the union of the old Grand Lodges, York, Ancients and Moderns, wherever their rites existed, and the beauty and strength that the craft have secured from the harmony which the fathers thus bequeathed to the present generation.

M.E. High Priest and Members of the Shekinah: —

Twenty-five years ago your charter was granted; the dispensation was dated Dec. 27, 1855, and signed by Dr. DANIEL HARWOOD, Grand High Priest. The history of its origin and progress you will gain from other addresses to-night.

My own connection began a few years after the prudent builders had organized their work, and formed the policy of management that has proved such a conspicuous success.

Here the royal arch first opened my mind to the occult lore involved in "the art and mystery" of Freemasonry, and made impressions to which many happy hours of hopeful study into its arcana are due.

As I recall those days, it was a cordial and enthusiastic fraternity, full of ardor and pride in the way they did their work, full likewise of harmony, social buoyancy, and brotherly kindness in the hours of refreshment. A hearty, frank, and keenly intelligent companionship, who appreciated the benefits of Freemasonry, and lived up to its requirement in the spirit as well as in the letter. The memory of our festivals lingers on my mind fragrant as the roses of spring.

The bond of brotherhood seemed a spontaneous emanation of their hearts. In the purity of its chaste and buoyant expansiveness this Chapter would have seemed Arcadian, were one not also aware that this kindly band were men of *busy* lives, charged with duties and cares; self-poised men of firm will,

strong judgment, and independent thought, each in his own way, and according to his own lights, energetically making his mark on the working world; in a matter of principle not to be moved the ninth part of a hair; but with a benevolence and charity open as day in its helpfulness to the well-deserving and the suffering.

It would be impossible to sketch all the members, and I hope it will not tire your patience should I recall a few of those best known to me to the memory of their compeers.

There was Dr. CHAS. A. DAVIS, who had long been a leading spirit in the Chapter, — wise in his profession, gentle of speech, upright in heart, firm in his principles, steadfast to his friends, and a devoted lover of Masonry. This Chapter seemed truly a child of his affections, and whether at work or in the hours of recreation he delighted to give pleasure to his Companions, and to promote the virtues of the rite. His early death was a grief to his friends, and a loss to our rites. I assisted with his Companion peers in the ancient and accepted Scottish rite, who held a Lodge of Sorrow to his memory, at Lowell. It was a ceremony worthy the exalted rank he held. The audience were hushed as death itself before the stately catafalque, and as the sublime ceremony wore along, his numerous friends burnt the incense of their silent prayers for him who had laid down his well-used working tools, and now faced the mercy-seat of the Shekinah in the temple of the New Jerusalem on high, clothed in his uprightness, seeking that highest initiation, of which the prophet has said, "He shall *enter* into peace — they shall *rest* on their couch." — *Isaiah* 57 : 2.

Here, also, I laid the foundation of a long friendship with a brother chip of the law, TRACY P. CHEEVER, Esq. who had taken these degrees whilst this Chapter was working under a dispensation, and was subsequently elected the first High Priest under the charter, which post he held for many years. To you who have lived his neighbors and friends I need not rehearse his valued and zealous services in the interests of this Chapter. It has been my good fortune also to know him in his connections with the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts. For

many years, and under successive Grand Masters, his legal talents and broad Masonic knowledge were called in play as chairman of the most laborious and important of its standing committees, — that on Masonic trials. He did great service in establishing orderly precedents for the course of proceedings, and in reducing to the precision of a code of justice the Masonic law on this class of matters.

To P.G.M. GARDNER'S wise plan of permanency of membership in its standing committees, so as to establish steadiness of policy, the credit is due of giving the Grand Lodge the means of estimating the abilities of Brother CHEEVER correctly. When the late beloved Brother TITUS died and left vacant the important office of Grand Secretary, Brother CHEEVER was prevailed on to fill the place *ad interim*. The Grand Lodge, by a most flattering vote, elected him Secretary, and, emulating the policy of Judge GARDNER, seem disposed to keep him there.

Masonry brings back among those who took the degrees about the same time with myself a happy and brilliant group of acolytes: SAMUEL HATCH, now the venerable, ubiquitous, persuasive father of the Boston auctioneers, — a stalwart class of citizens, who have made more orations than "Boston's hundred orators," and made them more to the point. Companion HATCH has been in the "going, going, gone" line, I believe, ever since Boston became a city; but that other spiritual auctioneer, Old Father Time, has not yet knocked him down as "gone" to either of the bidders for the soul of man. His candle was lighted at the altar fires of the Skekinah; may it burn long in the land, and when it goes out may its last flicker dart upwards towards the uncreated fires of heaven.

There was Companion BROWN, who, like Hiram Abif (may his soul rest!), was skilled in working gold and silver. I think he was the best-looking of the group. He wore his apron with a grace that our first father, the venerable Adam, could hardly have surpassed in those days when an apron was an entire suit of clothes.

Then there were those two limbs of the law, SIDNEY WEBSTER and MILTON ANDROS. Though they never sought

office in this Chapter, yet they are among the most brilliant of our jewels. Each emigrated soon to other cities. Companion ANDROS planted his stakes in San Francisco, where he has brilliantly achieved his early promise of becoming an acute and gifted advocate, and for us, as the most western member of our Chapter, observes the setting sun sink into the ocean behind the golden gate. His position is, indeed, reversed from that of the "magi of the East" in this, that where they looked east, he looks west, to observe the "star in the East;" but the fires of Masonry burn bright on his altars, and this night, when the wassail bowl goes around, we will hail thee from the east and from the west, O absent, but unforgotten Companion!

Brother WEBSTER, also, soon after receiving his degrees, removed to New York, and settled among the wild Celtic, Teutonic, and Platt Deutsch tribes, who divide that city with the descendants of the Anglo-Yankee pioneers.

The soft, melodious tones of the daughters of the Knickerbockers soothed his soul like the melody of the harp of David. He married! Peace and happiness have made a home with them. His career at the bar has been industrious, successful, and distinguished. Troops of friends surround him. He is one of those men to whose perceptions and judgment New York appeals for counsel, but he repels all political advancement. Unsophisticated with the allurements of the Empire City, his heart clings to the Masonic associations he formed in this Chapter in the golden days of youth.

Well can many of you remember the impressive and dignified style of his oratory, the felicity of manner and exquisite tact with which he held the gavel of authority when he presided as your elected Master over the Past Master's Lodge, and the admirable promise of ritualistic abilities he there displayed.

I think also of another group of Companions: CHARLES CALDWELL, long your efficient Secretary; now, alas, also degenerated into a Knickerbocker, — one whom we regarded as of the salt of the earth when he was with us, and who has not yet lost his savor. His untiring energy is reaping a well-deserved prosperity.

For another, Dr. CHURCHILL, has the lamp of life been extinguished, and this Chapter shall know him here no more. He and Companion LOTHROP were accounted by our experts among our best workers in those days.

To High Priest LOTHROP we never can forget what we owed, also, for his efforts to enliven our recreation with music, wit, and song.

Another group of *one* I recall as he then was. He has a triad of avocations by which he is known of men and women. As Mason, editor, and poet, I recall the stalwart BENJAMIN P. SHILLABER to your mind's eye. I see him, also, as he was in boyhood, for he and I are townsmen.

He was not of the spiritual elect, who were born on "Christian shore;" but he drew his natal breath on the other side of "the creek," and his first sight of land was that happy coast, and his first aspiration was towards it.

Old friend, whether you are here to-night or are nursing your aristocratic gout at home, we "hail" you in each of your varied capacities!

I shall tell no tales to this discriminating and expecting audience concerning your adventures in Frenchman's lane, whether it be with Ham's pears, or other pairs, or with apparitions; I shall not indulge the curiosity of this audience with the secrets of "Clam-shell corner," or the mysteries of "Liberty bridge;" or even of the side shows, where "Jerry's fort," or "Miss Nancy Drew's," might be the theatre. I shall not even tell them whether "Ike" was copied after the youthful experiences of Bob Shillaber's brother Ben. Perhaps "Ike," like Topsey, growed; but the kindly aunt was as truly a creation of your brain and heart as the Maria of Sterne, or the Don Quixotte of Cervantes. No, my good old friend, though Sir John and Justice Shallow talked of roystering times over "an apple of his own grafting," when that reporter Shakespeare was by and made a note of it, our youth symbolized the dignity of our maturity in that sobriety which the apostle vaunted when "seeing it is the third hour of the day."

I frame no wish that you may have a new heart; yours is

full of Masonic charity and human sympathy good enough for this world. I feel more concerned about *our toes* holding out, so we can continue to ascend and descend the ladder, as we work at the ninth arch, without being hoisted or lowered in a basket!!

When Robert Burns presided over the Sons of Light at Tarbolton (and, by the way, one of the earliest Royal Arch Chapters in Scotland was part of this Lodge of Freemasons at Tarbolton), as Deputy Master, as early as 1784, he addressed the Sons of Old Kilmarnock Lodge in language whose freshness and hearty directness have not yet grown stale: —

> "Within this dear mansion may wayward contention
> Or withered envy ne'er enter;
> May Secrecy round be the mystical bond,
> And brotherly love be the centre."

It is nearly a hundred years since Burns breathed out to St. James Lodge: —

> "Adieu! a heart's warm, fond adieu,
> Dear brothers of the mystic tie,
> Ye favored and enlightened few,
> Companions of my social joy."

His memory comes back again when the parting strains of his "Old Lang Syne" warn the brethren that they have wives to be comforted at home, as well as Masonic friends at the Lodge. For the past century Burns has been the favorite poet of our craft, wherever his tongue was known, and a duty rests with our living Masonic poets that his Masonic Centennial shall be celebrated in ample form. Let Companion Shillaber take notice that from him is expected the choicest song on that occasion. Their mutual sympathy for downright, honest-hearted manliness is a guarantee to the "enlightened few" that they will lose nothing when we have the flavor of Burns, strained through the sympathetic perceptions of Shillaber.

Ladies who have graced this meeting, — Masons' wives, daughters, or sweethearts, as the most of you are, — is it not singular that this same Robert Burns, lover, poet, song-writer,

Freemason, as he was, adoring the small hours of the morning at a lodge banquet more than a night-cap and a bed, should, in spite of all, have furnished the unvarying signal of modern times for the breaking up of those banquets he loved to keep up, and the return home of those husbands he liked to keep abroad? You hardly know what a treasure he has been to the regularity of your households; what a help to your efforts for order and seasonable hours.

Companions: —

The quarter of a century of history for this Chapter has been completed with a record of honor for the officers through whose judgment and assiduity it has reached this memorial day. Had not the Companions equally with the officers been worthy, temperate, and zealous, the Chapter would never have reached this respectable age. To those of us who wear the silver colors in our locks Masonry is more a matter of retrospect than of prospect.

In 1808 Robert Lash, Jr., was appointed one of the Grand Stewards of the Grand Chapter of this State. In 1855 he was one of the petitioners for the grant of your charter (then being seventy-seven years old). He saw his fiftieth Masonic birthday celebrated, and died at the age of eighty-two years, full of honors, and mourned by the fraternity.

More than a century has passed since Companion Lash was born, yet some who have seen him here may live to tell that fact at the next Quarter Centennial Communication. We pass away, and others take our places; the leaves and blossoms of the coming year will be as green, and fresh, and fragrant as those of prior years.

Generations of the fraternity will sweep across the stage in long succession; but the springtime and harvest of the holy humanity of Freemasonry, perennial and eternal as the human race, will yield their aroma in every generation.

The young Masons will be as zealous in Masonry, as firm to resist its enemies, as those we honor for past services; yet it will make them firmer and wiser to look back at the struggles and faith of the pioneers.

Young Masons, would you walk in the faith that made the craft strong, set your faces like flints against ignorance, oppression, and intolerance. Freemasonry proclaims the divine right of the people to religious and political liberty, to independence and fraternity. Stand ye firm in this faith for the good of your fellow-men. In the pursuit of happiness "be ye wise as serpents and harmless as doves." Relax not in that charity which vaunteth not itself.

Reflect on these precepts of St. Paul: Be not weary in well-doing; let your moderation be known of all men; walk in wisdom to them that are without; finally, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, — those things which you have both learned, and received, and heard, do, and the God of Peace be with you.

May the Chapter of the Shekinah continue to prosper; may the uncreated light feed a perpetual fire on its altars, and when the Holy Architect of the universe drops his plumb line in the midst of this people, our Israel, may he not pass by them any more.

And now, Companions, the time to close draws near. At the next Quarter Centennial Communication the most of us will be decaying under the drooping acacia; but for those of you whose work is not yet done under the meridian sun, and who will gather at the call, let us who shall have passed away dwell tenderly in your recollection, our faults forgotten, our services unvalued in the money of the merchant, our merit unweighed in the balance, and as the radiant light of life and happiness sheds its glory upon you, pour one libation to your dead Companions, and go on with the banquet that cheers you amid your toils. Farewell!

POEM.

By Comp. Benjamin P. Shillaber.

Shekinah! — splendor of the ancient fane,
Which fell around the ark like golden rain,
Filling the house with luminous accord,
In flame revealed, the glory of the Lord!
No miracle like this for ours we claim,
But boast the honor of its brilliant name,
And keeping this, a cynosure, in sight,
We lift our eyes and struggle for more light, —
Light which shall dissipate the mists of time,
And from our altar stream in beams sublime,
Perfection giving to what now we scan,
And showing grander dignity in man.
This, the beginning, where rare virtues blend,
Prefigures great fulfilment in the end,
When human worth shall fructify in grace,
And with accretive glory fill the place.

As round this scene the wakened vision runs,
Shekinah's brightness sparkles in her sons:
An offspring worthy of its lineage,
Good men and true by every standard gauge,
Of which their honored mother may be proud,
Possessing claims by every one allowed,
And, showing by their love and loyalty,
A filial meed that we too seldom see,
Where boys ignore such sentimental gush,
And go it, irrespective, with a rush.
She boasts a past of five and twenty years,
Her own admission, which one faintly hears,
Where femininity is held to show
How old one is when youthful seasons go,
Deeming coercive questions an offence,
And whispering census men in confidence!

Calmly, serenely flows her gentle life,
Unmarred by discord, undisturbed by strife,
Like some fair river, its green banks along,
Which paints with verdure, and gives voice to song,
Unforced its good, but by its action cheers,
Refreshes, quickens, gladdens, and endears,
And, as Shekinah's worth to view expands,
We proudly point, proclaiming, "There she stands!"

One generation — scarcely less — of life
Has seen our ark, with benefaction rife,
Shedding abroad its influence benign
In beams of warm Companionship to shine,
To cheer and aid by love's inspiring breath,
And bind enduringly for life and death.
The dead, though dropping from our loving side,
Still through our hearts in fond procession glide,
Restored by memory's cabalistic wand,
And with renewed affection with us stand:
DAVIS — the pioneer — whose virtues bright
Gave the Shekinah life it feels to-night;
LOTHROP, the generous, manly, kind, and true,
Whose heart no guile or falsehood ever knew;
CHURCHILL — the "doctor" — in whose presence shone
For wit the light, for fellowship the tone;
LUTHER, preëminent for sturdy worth,
Ne'er leaving duty till he left the earth.
Honored be those just spirits in that sphere,
Where ripen glory's seeds implanted here,
The unsealed gaze of whose terrestrial eyes
Has seen the grand shekinah of the skies!
Dropped from our rolls, yet never from our heart,
They, one by one, for that broad shore depart;
But, like brave soldiers on the deadly plain,
We keep compacted, though our mates are slain:
"Forward!" the cry; "Close ranks!" and on we run,
To do the work the stricken would have done,
Waiting the season when the bolt of fate
Shall seal *our* doom and *our* place vacate,
Leaving Companions, as our past they view,
To give, if we deserve it, tribute due.

But not one note of gloom should here obtrude
To mar the occasion's glad beatitude.

This is a time for happy feeling fixed,
Admitting of emotions rather mixed,
A streak of jolly fat, and serious lean,
With a small streak of sentiment between.
'Tis meet for joyful thought that time has flown
With such a wealth of favor to us shown;
So grand a growth, so healthy and so strong,
And in such harmony we've moved along,
That scarce a ripple has disturbed the stream,
Lit by Companionship's effulgent beam.
Companion*ship!* — that ship, the stanch and true,
Whose scarlet banner marks the ether blue,
Its prow set forward, pointing to the sun,
Over the changing waves of time to run.
With sails all drawing, fresh the wind abeam,
She glides, as glides the phantom of a dream,
Dashing the spray with graceful force aside,
And as a monarch moving o'er the tide.
Her timbers sound, her rigging taut and right,
No dread has she of elemental fight;
Rightly commanded, with a gallant crew,
Her course she takes her mission to pursue,
And we, her passengers, in safety bide,
Her aim our boast, her loveliness our pride.

Grand old Shekinah! with what relish true,
We met each moon our duty to pursue,
In the old hall, with cosiness replete,
And scarcely e'er was known a vacant seat, —
Especially on visitation night,
When good work lent a zest to appetite,
And mirth and wisdom graced festivity,
Beneath the sparkling lead of TRACY P.
Glorious reminder of that early host,
To-day our inspiration and our toast!
Though years have fled, and he's no longer young,
His head is level and still prompt his tongue,
As in those jubilistic nights of yore,
When he would set the table on a roar;
Echoes of which still linger, it is said,
Among the cobwebbed arches overhead,
And sometimes present tenants, startled, hear
Murmurs remindful of that old-time cheer,
Subdued and soft, like music in the air,

Checked in its cadence, but of sweetness rare,
And while they listen, breathless, to its sound,
Say the old "Nightingales" still are round.

Happy the feeling that the present brood
Is worthy the Shekinah motherhood,
Which leaves no merit of the virtuous past
Its present quality to overcast;
They merely lack the age, and every year
That slight disparity will disappear.
With eye prophetic I the future trace,
As best I may, with profitable grace,
And see, by aid of my far-reaching glass,
The future and its scenes before me pass:
The young grown old, the stalwart of to-day
Bowed and decrepit, weary, worn, and gray,
Nearing the close of time's exhausting race,
The young fast pressing on to fill their place.
Still stanch and true Shekinah grandly beams,
In realizing fruitage of our dreams,
Improving on the effort of the past,
To grow with brightening lustre to the last.

We've not yet reached that antiquated state,
And for its coming are content to wait,
With hearts alive for business of to-day,
Where duty calls and will points out the way,
To help enhance Shekinah's sacred flame,
And give it grandeur worthy of its name.
To do our level best and what we can,
Is all the best have done since time began;
The little pool, reflecting back the sun,
Gives all its surface to be shone upon,
And our Shekinah may thus take its stand,
Great in degree, if not in all so grand,
As that which dazed the Israelitish eyes,
About the ark of Solomon the wise;
So we, in good companionship and fun,
May do just right by doing as we've done.

HISTORICAL SKETCH.

By Comp. Tracy P. Cheever.

In November, 1855, a few Royal Arch Masons, all residing in Chelsea, except Comps. Knapp and Savory, met at the office of Comp. Dr. Charles A. Davis,[1] then, and for many years, surgeon of the U.S. Marine Hospital, located at Chelsea, to consider the expediency of forming a Chapter of R.A. Masons. Dr. Davis was the moving spirit, the projector of the enterprise.

His associates, all the R.A. Masons then known as such in Chelsea, were Robert Lash[1] (then seventy-seven years old), Edwin Barnes,[1] Slade Luther,[1] Patrick Murray, Wm. E. P. Haskell, and Col. Wm. Goodwin. To obtain the constitutional number (9) necessary for a dispensation they were compelled to invoke external assistance. Accordingly they invited Comp. Wm. Knapp,[1] who had been the second Master of Star of Bethlehem Lodge, and Comp. Thomas C. Savory, to join them in the petition for a dispensation. These Companions, though then residing in Boston, had for many years previous lived in Chelsea. The *aroma* of Chelsea was therefore preserved in their selection.

The dispensation was issued to these nine Companions on December 27, 1855, by Dr. Daniel Harwood, Grand High Priest.

Prior to the issuing of the dispensation, the Companions had met at Dr. Davis' office, on December 12, for organization, the venerable Robert Lash acting as chairman.

[1] Deceased.

The following were elected as officers *pro forma*, viz. : —

Comp.	William Knapp	M.E.H. Priest.
"	Edwin Barnes	" King.
"	Wm. E. P. Haskell . . .	" Scribe.
"	Charles A. Davis . . .	Secretary.
"	Slade Luther	Treasurer.

At this meeting, although it was informal, the dispensation not having yet been issued, were presented the applications of the following Brethren for the degrees, —John F. Fellows, Tracy P. Cheever, Eben W. Lothrop, John Low, and George H. Rice.

January 11, 1856, the Chapter met for the first time, armed with the authority of the dispensation, in Low's Hall, corner of Broadway and Malden street (now Everett avenue), which was the hall of Star of Bethlehem Lodge. At this meeting the Brethren above named were balloted for, admitted, and received the mark master Mason's degree. At this time five additional applications were received.

February 18, 1856, the R.A. degree was conferred for the first time, and the following candidates were exalted, viz. : —

Tracy P. Cheever,
Eben W. Lothrop,
John F. Fellows,
A. B. Wyman,
George H. Rice,

and they were on the same evening elected associates. Upon this, the first occasion of their convocation, the Companions were too few in number to confer the degree in an adequate manner, and accordingly called several Companions from St. Andrews and St. Paul's Chapters, Boston, to their aid, among whom were John McClellan, who officiated as H.P., Richard Briggs, Peter C. Jones, Wm. H. L. Smith, and others, assisting.

Comp. Slade Luther presented a beautiful marble key-stone, for which he received the thanks of the body.

At the meeting of April 18, 1856, Comp. Davis, who had been serving as Secretary, resigned the office, and Comp. George H. Rice was elected in his stead.

At this meeting a Lodge of Instruction was opened, Comp. Tracy P. Cheever in the East, and the work and lectures were rehearsed, although how the presiding officer or the other Companions could have known anything of the Ritual is not readily perceived.

Applications were numerous during the year of the dispensation, principally of members of Star of Bethlehem Lodge, and all the meetings were largely attended by Companions from Boston.

On May 15 the R.A. degree was conferred for the second time, and on this occasion the newly exalted Companions took hold and gave the elders a lift in the work, viz. : —

Comp.	John F. Fellows . .	as Capt. of the Host.
"	Tracy P. Cheever . .	" Prin. Sojourner.
"	Eben W. Lothrop . .	" Master of 1st Vail.
"	George H. Rice . .	" " " 2d "

November 28, 1856. A deputation from the Grand Chapter attended for the purpose of visiting the Chapter, examined records, by-laws, etc., and saw a portion of the work. These visitors were Comps. John McClellan, Solon Thornton, and Dr. Edward B. Moore.

Such a visitation of a Chapter U.D., prior to the granting of a charter, was in accordance with the provision of the Constitution of the Grand Chapter.

During the year of the dispensation great activity was exhibited by the petitioners, and their associates who first received the degrees. Meetings for work were numerous, and much interest was shown in the enterprise by the leading Brethren of St. Andrew's and St. Paul's Chapters, who came over and lent their aid and sympathy. To St. Andrew's we were specially indebted for the gift of much valuable paraphernalia, including vails, etc.

October 17, 1856. In anticipation of being able to secure a

charter, the following officers were selected to act under it, viz., and, as will hereafter appear, became the first officers: —

Comp.	TRACY P. CHEEVER	M.E. H.P.
"	EBEN W. LOTHROP	E.K.
"	ALPHEUS J. HILBOURN	E.S.
"	JOHN F. FELLOWS	Capt. of the Host.
"	CHARLES A. DAVIS	R.A. Capt.
"	WILLIAM C. NORTON	Master 3d Vail.
"	ROBERT DAVIDSON	" 2d "
"	JAMES L. SMITH	" 1st "
"	SLADE LUTHER	Treasurer.
"	GEORGE H. RICE	Secretary.

December 9, 1856. At a stated meeting of the M.E. Grand R.A. Chapter of Massachusetts, held this day, a charter was granted to WILLIAM KNAPP, and twenty-four others, to be called " The Chapter of the Shekinah."

December 22, 1856. The Chapter was consecrated by M.E. DANIEL HARWOOD, Grand High Priest, assisted by a full staff of grand officers, when the officers before mentioned were duly installed.

January 2, 1857. The first convocation under the charter was held. Meetings were numerous during the year, two being generally held in each month; there were many applicants, and much work.

June 19, 1857. ROBERT LASH was admitted an honorary member.

[1] December 18, 1857. At the annual meeting the officers elected for the ensuing year were Comp. CHEEVER, reëlected H.P.; Comp. GEORGE H. RICE, who had thus far served acceptably as Secretary, King; Comps. FELLOWS and DAVIS were continued in their respective stations of Captain of the Host and R.A. Captain, and Comp. E. W. LOTHROP was elected Principal Sojourner.

[1] The Masonic zeal and prosperity of the Chapter had become so pronounced, that in 1857 two of its members were elected by a unanimous vote to office in the Grand Chapter of Mass., viz., Comp. CHEEVER to be Deputy Grand High Priest, and Comp. FELLOWS to be Grand Captain of the Host.

February 19, 1858. Chapter visited by M.E. Comp. WENDELL T. DAVIS, Grand High Priest.

It seems that the first member of the Chapter who died was Capt. JOSHUA FOSTER, Tyler, an old resident of Chelsea. His death occurred in April, 1858, of which the Chapter took due notice.

During the year 1858 the work was very thriving, and numerous accessions were made to the membership.

At the annual meeting, December 1, 1858, the following were elected officers for the ensuing year: —

Comp.	TRACY P. CHEEVER	M.E. H.P.
"	CHARLES A. DAVIS	E.K.
"	GEORGE W. CHURCHILL	E.S.
"	JOHN F. FELLOWS	Capt. of the Host.
"	EBEN W. LOTHROP	Prin. Sojourner.
"	CHARLES M. AVERY	R.A. Capt.
"	JOHN E. WILDER	Master of 3d Vail.
"	WILLIAM A. WILLIAMS	" 2d "
"	EDWIN C. BAILEY	" 1st "
"	SLADE LUTHER	Treasurer.
"	CHARLES CALDWELL	Secretary.

October, 1859, Comp. JOHN E. WILDER died; his funeral was attended by the Chapter, also by Star of Bethlehem Lodge and Palestine Commandery, K.T. His death was deeply lamented by his Brethren of all grades. He was genial, affable, bright, with a presence like sunshine.

Work continued to prosper during the year. At its close Comp. CHEEVER declined further service as H.P., and Comp. EBEN W. LOTHROP was elected and installed as the 2d H.P.

During the period extending from the date of the dispensation to the end of Comp. CHEEVER's administration, December, 1859, seventy candidates were exalted. At the end of that year the Chapter had seventy-one members, two of them, Comp. JOSHUA FOSTER and Comp. JOHN E. WILDER, having died. *Numbers*, however, were not sought for; *quality* was the

touchstone for these early members, as may be judged from the following specimens of their work: —

Brethren of reputation, Masonic and otherwise: Eben W. Lothrop, W.M. of Star of Bethlehem Lodge; W.M. of Robert Lash Lodge; H.P. of the Chapter for four years, and the holder of many offices in Palestine Commandery, — a most thorough Mason, citizen, and friend. John F. Fellows, W. M. Star of Bethlehem Lodge; Treas. of Robert Lash Lodge, and as Captain and Grand Captain of the Host never surpassed, — a sterling soldier and gentleman. John Low, W.M. of Star of Bethlehem Lodge, and the incumbent of many official stations in the other Chelsea Masonic bodies, as well as an officer of the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts,— one of the oldest citizens and greatest lights of Chelsea. Charles M. Avery, W.M. Joseph Warren Lodge; H.P. of Chapter of the Shekinah; E. Com. Palestine Commandery; T.I.M. Naphthali Council R. and S.M., and for many years Grand Lecturer in the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts, and the G. Com. of Massachusetts and Rhode Island, — conspicuous for his accurate knowledge and effective rendering of Masonic ritual. Geo. H. Marden, W.M. King Solomon's Lodge; H.P. Chapter of Shekinah, from 1863 to 1866; E. Com. of Palestine Commandery. Charles T. Gay, H.P. 1870–71, who was also W.M. of Star of Bethlehem Lodge, and has filled many other Masonic stations, including that of E. Com. of Palestine Commandery, and positions in the Grand Chapter and Commandery. Rev. Prof. Charles H. Leonard, of Tufts College, Chaplain of the Chapter, and also, for several years, of Star of Bethlehem Lodge. Capt. William W. Peirce was long efficient as a Mason, holding important offices in the various branches of the institution. Capt. W. A. Williams, W.M. of Star of Bethlehem Lodge, — a distinguished civil engineer. Charles L. Woodbury, — one of the most widely known and thorough Masonic scholars in the country, the orator of our twenty-fifth anniversary, who has filled high positions in almost every grade of Masonry.

In addition to the number of those who may be called Lights in Masonry, either local or general, many of the other recipients of the degrees in the Chapter during this period were gentlemen and citizens of honorable distinction in their respective spheres, who have been prevented, by various circumstances and conditions, from prominence in Masonry, such as Sydney Webster, Gen. Joseph Andrews, of Salem; Dr. George W. Churchill; Charles Caldwell, for so many years our indefatigable, and, so far as handwriting goes, our inscrutable Secretary; also Milton Andros; Robert Davidson, the genial caterer, who was so thoughtful of our early stomachs, and always worked against thirst, to which in the hard work of our evenings the Companions were liable; Col. Samuel Hatch, the well-known auctioneer and gentleman; Benj. P. Shillaber, our genial and warm-hearted poet, the laureate of all our Masonic bodies, whose songs have so often warmed our hearts and uplifted our lives; the Scandinavian Captains William and Henry Read, and Michael and Charles Watson, for generous grit and glee, two descendants of Odin; Frederick Spoor, the successor of Davidson, for the pregnant season of refreshment; Thomas A. Carruth, and others of equal consideration and influence.

The actual founders, *i.e.*, the petitioners for the dispensation, were Companions who had been of excellent repute in Masonry. William Knapp was the second W.M. of Star of Bethlehem Lodge. On removing to Boston he became connected with St. Andrew's Chapter and Boston Commandery of Knights Templars. He was for many years Assistant Clerk in the Police Court in Boston. Dr. Charles A. Davis, who may be considered the father of the Chapter, as he first conceived the idea of its establishment, was the popular and efficient surgeon and superintendent of the United States Marine Hospital, at Chelsea. He was very earnest and zealous in various departments of Masonry, but was especially devoted to this body, and to the Commandery, of which he was first Commander. His apparently untimely death was a sore affliction, especially to those who had worked with him so harmoniously in the early days.

Edwin Barnes had long been connected with St. Andrew's

Chapter in Boston, and was familiar with the work and lectures of the degree, and was always ready to undertake any part. He became a member of the old Lodge of St. Andrew, in March, 1836, and was its W. Master in 1839–40 and '41. In Templar Masonry he was first a member of Boston Commandery, and afterward a charter member of Palestine Commandery.

Comp. Wm. Goodwin, a veteran of the war of 1812, received his degrees in St. Stephen, N.B., and was W.M. of the lodge in Calais. He was a very quiet, although a very efficient, worker in Masonry, and at the venerable age of eighty-three years now commands the almost filial respect and reverence of his associates.

Slade Luther, the first Treasurer, held this office for sixteen consecutive years; he also served the Commandery for a series of years in the same capacity. He was a man of the highest integrity and fidelity in all his relations — a good Mason, both operative and speculative.

Comps. Murray, Savory, and Haskell were well-known for their Masonic zeal and interest; but always declined office, and were therefore not so much in the foreground as their associates.

Robert Lash (*clarum et venerabile nomen*) came to Chelsea to spend the declining years of his life. He had been W.M. of Mt. Lebanon Lodge, Boston, Grand Scribe in the Grand Chapter of Massachusetts, in 1818, Grand King, in 1819, Deputy Grand H.P., from 1829 to 1833. He had served in several stations in Boston Commandery K.T., including that of E. Com., was Grand Generalissmo of the Grand Commandery of Massachusetts and Rhode Island in 1829–30; Deputy Grand Com. in 1831, and Grand Com. in 1832. He died in 1862, at the age of eighty-three years, and was followed to the grave by Mt. Lebanon Lodge and Boston Commandery, as well as by all the Masonic bodies of Chelsea. The second lodge in Chelsea was named for him. Bro. Lash was a conspicuous Mason for about sixty years, and, according to Bro. Moore and other leaders, was one of the most faithful and useful Brethren in the Commonwealth during the anti-masonic

persecution. He was a gentleman of the old school, and of most winning manners. In his old age his silver locks, his easy grace, and intellectual and polished conversation charmed all with whom he came in contact. His life was so exemplary that the bitterest anti-Mason could never breathe a suspicion against him, and it was more than once observed by neutrals, in the time of the crusade, that the Masons could not have murdered Morgan, or perpetrated any of the enormities alleged against them, because Mr. Lash was too honest and true to associate with murderers. The Chapter with great propriety made him its first honorary member.

During the first administration under the charter a remarkably able and varied membership accrued. So far as ritual was concerned, we need make no boast; but we may take the statements of the M.E. Grand High Priest, Wendell T. Davis, who, in 1858, said publicly in Washington Chapter, at Salem, that he had visited all the chapters in the jurisdiction, and that the Chapter of the Shekinah stood at the head. The reason was, that the officers pulled together, were never absent from their stations, and the members attended all the meetings and lent their encouragement. It is only fair to say that the work in subsequent years has been continued after the original pattern, and that our M.E.P.H.P. Avery, Tent, Seely, Gay, Ilsley, and Roberts have shown a ritualistic ability never surpassed. The social element was carefully cultivated — Comp. Cheever, from the beginning, ordered refreshment, of a simple and inexpensive kind, to be served at every meeting. This little refreshment evolved the humanitarian qualities of the Companions, and operated as a charm upon visitors from Boston and elsewhere, who were always numerous.

Notwithstanding the expense of establishing the Chapter and placing it upon a firm basis, its financial interests were not disregarded, — two hundred dollars were laid away each year during this administration, and at its close, the Chapter had six hundred dollars, the principal of a permanent fund, and the foundation of the present respectable accumulation. The

Chapter was not in condition to add to the principal of this fund until 1872.

Shortly after a charter had been granted to Orient Chapter, at Hyannis, the Companions at Cape Cod induced Comp. CHEEVER, with his Officers, to repair to Hyannis, for the purpose of placing their new Chapter upon its legs (so to speak), as the Companions there had little or no knowledge of the work. Thereupon the officers of the Shekinah went down to the Cape. Opening the Chapter at Hyannis at ten o'clock, P.M., they conferred the Mark Master's, P. Master's, and M.E.M. degrees upon *thirty* candidates before the next morning's sunrise. After this work they were called off to refreshment (breakfast). Sailing in the harbor occupied the forenoon of that day, and at three, P.M., a Chapter of R.A.M. was opened, and between that time and the midnight hour following the thirty candidates were exalted. This somewhat elaborate working episode was highly relished by both sides.

The degree of Past Master (utterly senseless and unnecessary as it is in the R.A. scheme, though inherently of great significance) received special attention in the early days of the Chapter. We thought the lessons of the degree valuable, and worthy of being given to the candidates in an impressive manner. Accordingly, in a somewhat dramatic form, as much reality as could be attained was given to all the preliminaries, and to the event itself which the degree illustrates. The manner in which the honors of the chair were conferred cannot be conveniently analyzed, or even described; but it usually produced a good effect both upon the recipient and the spectators.

No rudeness or levity was tolerated, but a marked gravity of decorum prevailed during the entire ceremony, and until the Lodge was closed.

The degree of M.E. Master, which was not then held in high esteem by the officers and leading members, was not conferred in the elaborate manner which has since been adopted; but all the other degrees were given with scrupulous care and accuracy, according to the accepted ritual of the time.

At the close of 1859 Comp. Cheever retired from the chair,

and at the annual meeting for choice of officers the following were elected: —

Comp.	EBEN D. LOTHROP	M.E.H. Priest.
"	CHARLES A. DAVIS	E. King.
"	GEORGE D. CHURCHILL	E. Scribe.
"	SLADE LUTHER	Treasurer.
"	CHARLES CALDWELL	Secretary.
"	JOHN F. FELLOWS	Capt. of the Host.
"	CHARLES M. AVERY	Prin. Soj.
"	CHARLES T. GAY	R.A. Captain.
"	WILLIAM A. WILLIAMS	Master of 3d Vail.
"	CHARLES F. HAYNES	" " 2d "
"	JOHN E. HESSELTINE	" " 1st "

Under Comp. LOTHROP'S administration the work went bravely on. His great shrewdness, sagacity, and humor served admirably in the trials and perplexities incident to the Past Master's degree, while his experience in the Chair of the Blue Lodge made him a very efficient administrator of the work and business of the Chapter. Comp. LOTHROP'S term of office covered more than half the period of the war of the rebellion, and although the prosperity of the Chapter was necessarily retarded, in consequence of that national struggle, so much suitable working material being engaged in the field, there were, nevertheless, sixty candidates exalted.

It is a somewhat surprising fact that although nearly all of these candidates were admitted to membership, only five of their names are found as members upon the catalogue printed in 1878, which contains a list of two hundred and thirty. Upon this list there were the names of nine Charter members, two of whom, Comps. EBEN W. LOTHROP and SLADE LUTHER, have since died, and eleven other members, one of whom, Comp. FREDERICK SPOOR, has died since its publication. Seventeen members, therefore, including the nine charter members, are all that now remain of the early Companionship.

"*Tempora mutantur et nos mutantur cum illis.*"

The Chapter had been noted for the excellence of its music,

which was employed in both work and refreshment. There were many fine singers, viz.: Comps. FELLOWS, TENT, HALL, BOWEN, GALE, and others, and they made the music lively and interesting. The *non*-musical members, viz.: JOHN LOW, LOTHROP, CARRUTH, and two or three others, who could not distinguish one of LUTHER'S chorals from a Strauss Waltz, out of envy, as was supposed, of the song birds, procured a song to be written, in 1860 or thereabouts, which was called "*The Nightingale's Song.*" It was sung at the banquets with superhuman verve and expression. The authorship of this remarkable lyric has never been clearly ascertained. Some, perhaps most, of the members attributed it to Comp. SHILLABER; while others think that Comp. CARRUTH, LOW, or some other leading member of the non-musical wing, was its creator. It was a song which, at least, had *punctuation*, if not *points*.

The revolving years brought the excellent administration of Comp. LOTHROP to a close, and at the annual election held December 11, 1863, the following officers were chosen, viz.: —

Comp.	GEORGE H. MARDEN	M.E.H.P.
"	J. E. BARRELL	E.K.
"	WM. GOODWIN	E.S.
"	CHARLES M. AVERY	Capt. of the Host.
"	CHARLES T. GAY	Prin. Soj.
"	CHARLES F. HAYNES	R.A. Capt.
"	SLADE LUTHER	Treasurer.
"	CHARLES CALDWELL	Secretary.
"	EDWARD T. WOODWARD	Master 3d Vail.
"	ALEX. CAMPBELL	" 2d "
"	H. O. ALLEN	" 1st "

During Comp. MARDEN'S administration (he was three times elected H.P.), which ended at the close of 1866, seventy candidates were exalted and received membership. Of these only twenty-eight are found on the list of 1878, the disappearance of many of them being accounted for by the establishment of the Chapter of the Signet, at Charlestown, which many of these members joined at its formation.

At the election held December 22, 1866, the following board of officers was elected, viz.: —

Comp.	CHARLES L. AVERY	M.E.H.P.
"	HENRY G. FAY	E.K.
"	JAMES M. GREENWOOD	E.S.
"	JOHN F. FELLOWS	Capt. of the Host.
"	JAMES TENT	Prin. Soj.
"	WILLIAM D. SEELEY	R.A. Capt.
"	SLADE LUTHER	Treasurer.
"	GEORGE W. VOSE	Secretary.
"	DANIEL E. CHASE	Master 3d Vail.
"	JOHN E. MARDEN	" 2d "
"	CHARLES A. MAKECHNIE	" 1st "

Comp. AVERY'S term of office as H.P. extended through the years 1867–8 and 9. During this term fifty-four candidates were exalted and admitted to membership. Thirty of these are on the list of 1878. The Chapter of the Signet, Charlestown, first daughter of the Shekinah, having been formed in 1868, Companions GEORGE H. MARDEN, DANIEL E. CHASE, and twenty-seven others, were dimitted to enable them to join the new body. At a subsequent date about a dozen others left us on the same errand, whereby the Chapter of the Shekinah was denuded of about twoscore excellent members.

Comp. AVERY'S well-known skill and accuracy in the various rituals were conspicuous in his rendition of the work of these degrees, and his own excellence was a sufficient stimulus to his associates in office. The prosperity of the Chapter continued unabated; but its membership was constantly invaded by the arch-enemy of mankind, giving us constant lessons of our mortality.

Comp. AVERY was succeeded in the office of High Priest by Comp. CHARLES T. GAY, who had previously occupied important stations in the Chapter. The Chapter continued prosperous as before. At the close of Comp. GAY'S administration Comp. JAMES TENT was called to the chair, which he graced for a term of four years, being conspicuous not only

for his ritualistic accomplishments, but for his zeal in the promotion of the work of the Chapter. Comp. TENT was succeeded by Comp. WILLIAM D. SEELEY, in 1876. Comp. SEELEY had previously filled very important stations in the Chapter, and well sustained the reputation of the chair as established by his predecessors. At the end of the year Comp. PHILIP G. ILSLEY was elected and installed High Priest, and by his industry, enthusiasm, and sound judgment, the work was maintained at the former level. Having faithfully served the Chapter during the years 1877 and 1878, he was succeeded in his turn by Comp. JOHN H. ROBERTS, whose well-known Masonic zeal, patience, and perseverance furnish a sufficient guarantee of a continuance of that prosperity, harmony, and fraternal good-will, which has been so characteristic of this Body from its inception. The incidents of these recent administrations are so fresh in the memory of all the members as to need no recital, and are perhaps more appropriately left for the chronicler of the future.

NOTE. — The whole number of Companions who have been admitted to membership in the Chapter, since its institution, is 431.

Whole number dimitted, 96; number suspended, 90; number expelled, 3.

Number deceased, 38.

Present number of members, 204.